Teacher Interview

Student Voice

is how engaged the kids are and how excited they are about picking their projects and, and, um choosing what they- how they want to present it and having so many options to choose from. That is what is the most.

.  I think the difference is-they love doing anything hands-on, so when we have any kind of a lab or do anything hands-on, a guest speaker who is doing some kind of activity-they enjoy that.  I think with this one it's more- I think it has to do with that it is their choice and a lot of them really feel like they are making a difference which is- we’ve got one boy that if you would ask any of his teachers they would say, he doesn't do anything and yet he is over the moon doing this project. And you know, he has brought in barrels for recycling and made posters for me to laminate to put on the barrels.  He has pretty well worked it all out.  He is like, I know there are other groups doing it and I think I should talk to them and that we should work this out so that we are all doing something the same, you know, that the rest of the school is not confused and

I say, this is you (laughter)?  Who hardly says two words and he hardly says two words most of the time.

, and you gotta think about it, they are really excited about the idea that they can prove it is happening and your suggesting why and that somebody might Listen to you, you know.

I think it is a different level because when they, when they do something that I am assigning, even when it is in centers where they have some choice about where, about what they do, it's still not the same level of you know, I guess, excitement.

I have one group that wants to, one of her ideas was they wanted to clean the pond and they were working out how to get-what machinary they were gonna get, so in some cases there might be some engineering.

Somebody went after today how much fertilizer.  I said you need to find that out, so, so-

Me: Okay, great.  Um, what impact are you seeing on your students?  Especially struggling learners?  
  
T: They are all engaged.  They are all involved in some way.  Um, they are all doing something.  In some cases it may just be offering an opinion or an idea but everybody has some part of it.  And I've never seen the kids work together as well as when they are working on that.  I mean we do groups-  
  
, it was based on who applied for what job.

.  Um, I’ve only had one group where I have had somebody come and say, "so and so won't do anything at all,” and, and they were fighting about it.  And you know, otherwise-

.  I think what they have discovered is that everybody needs to be doing something and I think that they have worked really hard at making sure that everybody is doing something

, there are a lot of jobs and tasks to be done and they have done a great job delegating and I am not even sure that they have locked into these that started out with.  I am the manager, I am the technician.  I think that they kind of worked out between themselves, this needs to be done.  Why don't you two go do this and we’ll do this? And then we will come back.  It's been amazing.

I, hadn't pull one of the girls out and had an issue, a very specific issue and she needed to be logged in to show the technology person what the problem was and I needed her for five minutes.  “Come in, log on.  Let's show Mrs. H,” and you, know see what we can do about it and if they have free time in their other classes, they have been allowed to use the classroom computers-

not yet and we are gonna do presentations next week and I intend to invite the two administrators to come down anytime during our classes during those two days and-  
  
Um, but they are accessible and the kids-that has been a neat thing too because the kids have interviewed our janitor-  
  
They have interviewed, um, our cafeteria ladies.  Um, the head of our food services.  They have interviewed the principals.  They have interviewed, I think somebody has interviewed the assistant principal.  So everybody has been really, really into it.  I even had a group that went over to the high school, you know to get, ask questions about garbage.

so even people outside of our building have been, you know. Very open to-I think that shows some leadership skills among the kids because-that is kind of a very scary thing to ask. 

.  That is another thing. It was really, really hard for me.  The first time one of them said, “Can I go interview someone?” I went hhhhhhhh [makes a sound showing she was leery and then laughter].  I can't clear that now.  I haven't cleared the way for you.  And then I was like you know these kids are thirteen, and they are getting to an age where they do need to take some ownership of some of this, and, and I said, “Here is what you should say.  You know, this is what we would like to do.  Is this a good time?  If this isn't a good time, then when can I come back?  Would you like me to, you know, give you a printed copy that you can answer it on paper.”  Which everybody has been pretty much willing to talk to everybody there on the spot?

Everybody has been really, really open, so, um-

].  We would probably be a little more locked in to, and I would have to limit what they did.  Like, you can choose from this list of things.  If you have an idea.  Maybe, this has been completely open ended. It would of; it would change the whole project if they didn't have the technology available to them.  
  
  
They don't take as much care and time with something like that.

there were some kids that said something to me about it after they used it in commuter lab.  Can we use Prezi for something else

**Teacher Power**

Can we use Prezi for something else. And I said, “I don't know what that is.”  And that’s very cool.  It is.

, I would be a lot more protective of my sixth graders and a lot less likely to just turn them loose and let em' go.  [Inaudible]. I would email them first and be like, I am gonna send some student.  Would that be okay?  Um, and if they say no, this isn't a good time then, thank you very much and come back.

, it's kinda like pushing the baby bird out of the nest.

That is another thing. It was really, really hard for me.  The first time one of them said, “Can I go interview someone?” I went hhhhhhhh [makes a sound showing she was leery and then laughter].  I can't clear that now.  I haven't cleared the way for you.  And then I was like you know these kids are thirteen, and they are getting to an age where they do need to take some ownership

He brought it right back the next day in perfect shape [laughter]. And, um, so, yeah, so that was hard.  That was hard for me to let go.

.” And uh, but there are so many things that I can't fix.

Part of it is, um, you know, me not having a technology background

I have to do a lot of reading on my own, which is not a problem but the kids, they get to a place and they run into a problem and I can't solve it immediately and then they are stuck for the next ten minutes.

they did not pick their groups

.  I did try to look at ability levels and personalities.

**Impact of technology**

Me: Well, maybe the purpose is different too?  
  
(Ask about purpose)  
  
T: Well.  That. And I don't know if it is because it is brand new or it is because of they are taking ownership of what they are doing and they feel like the backpacks belong to them and um, so-

. Almost, something, something gets broken on it.  I think that is mischief and I think that they, for whatever reason.  I don't know why they don't that, but they respect this. 

When we do other group projects. It's like I am constantly putting out those fires

Some of it they couldn't do without the technology.  I mean, they could take pictures and we could have them developed.  Um, and really the same with the video, but without the access to the Internet, and access to the laptops that can handle the pictures, and the video and-

if I had to do the project without technology, it would be a lot of, it would just be a different project.  They would probably have to sketch or draw pictures.  Which they like to do and they put some [inaudible].  We would probably be a little more locked in to, and I would have to limit what they did.  Like, you can choose from this list of things.  If you have an idea.  Maybe, this has been completely open ended. It would of; it would change the whole project if they didn't have the technology available to them.

I think it would take a lot longer to do it.  They’d have to; they’d be doing-instead of PowerPoint.  They would be making posters.  The quality when they do it by hand is not quite the same. 

**Special Education**

I, I, the other teacher, you know, I have two special ed teachers that work with me on a daily basis and they have been extremely supportive.

because we have had to let me take a group in outside where then other teachers stay back and vice versa.  We switch roles sometimes.  Um, it's really freed me up to do things that I haven't otherwise been able to do because of supervision issues.

.  And there are, I've got a few kids that are just, don't have the dexterity to do a handmade poster and have it look.  They, they couldn't do it. Or they would be doing reports, which, isn't.